Oaks and oak woodlands are a vital part of California’s landscape. They provide critical habitat for a large and diverse assortment of wildlife; they protect the quality of the state’s water resources by anchoring the soil, preventing erosion and sedimentation; and they provide beautiful scenery and opportunities for recreation. For many of the state’s residents oak woodlands are the iconic landscape of California and oak trees represent qualities held dear – strength, beauty, adaptability and longevity. Yet oak woodlands have been seriously depleted in the last 200 years and are still at risk – especially from an expanding population and increased residential and commercial development in foothill regions.

This talk will discuss the history of woodland management beginning in the Native American era, and outline some of the important ecological attributes of oaks including how they avoid drought, survive fire and coexist with native insect and disease pests. It will also cover the many values of oaks, as well as historical and current threats and what is being done today to ensure they will be conserved for future generations.

Doug McCreary is a University of California Cooperative Extension Natural Resources Specialist based at the Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center near Marysville. He is on the faculty of UC Berkeley’s Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management and received his PhD in tree physiology from Oregon State University in 1986. His research and outreach efforts focus on developing successful techniques for artificially regenerating native California oaks and he has published numerous research articles on this subject. He also authored a manual titled Regenerating Rangeland Oaks in California.

Blue oak woodland  Photo by Wes Dempsey
Field Trips
Wes Dempsey and Gerry Ingco, Co-chairs

TREE TOURS OF
CSU, CHICO CAMPUS
AND BIDWELL MANSION
February 26, March 12, March 26, April 9
Fridays
Meet at 10 am in the parking lot in front of the Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park for a 1 1/2 hour tour of about 30 of the trees in the CSU,C-Mansion arboretum. Other tours will follow at two-week intervals and will cover over 100 of the woody plants. This is the best collection north of UC Davis and Capitol Park in Sacramento. Saucer magnolia should be in bloom. See monkey puzzle (Chile), dawn redwood (China), cockspur coral (Brazil), and other interesting specimens. Bring your own specimens for ID; information about diseases, planting, or pruning will be given. Leaders: Gerry Ingco 893-5123 and Wes Dempsey 342-2293.

CSU, CHICO BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES GREENHOUSE TOUR
February 28
Sunday
Meet at 10 am in the campus parking lot beside the Health Center on Warner St (entrance to Nettleton Stadium and football field). From there we walk toward the railroad tracks to the greenhouses. See cacti, ferns, and tropical plants from all over the world including “Big Stinky”, better known as the “corpse flower” (too bad, it is dormant). Leader: Tim Devine 345-8444

SPOTTED FAWN LILIES
MCNAB CYPRESS IN MAGALIA
March 20
Saturday
Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 9 am or at the Coutelenc Road parking lot across the Skyway from the old Magalia train depot at 9:45 am. The masses of yellow and white Erythronium multiscapodium are one of our most spectacular floral displays. They blanket the slope down to the West Branch of the Feather River along with Fritillaria and the other usual suspects. Wear sturdy shoes (the trail is rough) and bring lunch and water. We will have lunch at the head dam on the Feather. Leaders: Wes Dempsey 530-342-2293 and Gerry Ingco 530-893-5123.

MAIDU MEDICINE WALK
UPPER BIDWELL PARK
March 21
Sunday
Meet at parking lot E (Horseshoe Lake) in Upper Bidwell Park at 9 am for about a one-mile walk to see 20-30 plants that the Maidu used in their crafts, food, and medicine. We will finish about noon. Wear sturdy shoes-some minor scrambling and bring water. Leader: Wes Dempsey 530-342-2293

Check out April Field Trips on page 7.
Executive Board Meeting

March 17, 2010
Wednesday  7:00 pm
SIERRA SUNRISE CLUBROOM
Phyllis Lindley  899-1514

Legislative Notes
by David Anderson

LULL BEFORE THE STORM

All of the 2009 bills supported by CNPS, but not given final action in 2009, have died in the California Legislature. According to the Senate/Assembly 2010 calendar, January 22 was the last day for any committee of the Senate or Assembly to hear and report to the Floor bills introduced in 2009. January 31 was the last day for the Assembly and Senate to pass bills introduced in 2009.

As yet (i.e., Feb. 10), CNPS has not taken a position on any 2010 bills. Indications are, however, that this period of inactivity may not last for long. The Capitol Weekly reports that the Schwarzenegger Administration is planning to seek exemption from California environmental laws for large construction projects throughout the State. The proposed exemptions are expected to include transportation, refinery, water, sewage and other projects. It was expected that the Governor’s exemption plan would be put in a “trailer bill” to the annual budget bill, but no such “trailer bill” has appeared to date. Of course, bills for exemptions from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) do not have to be tied to the annual budget bill. They could be entirely unrelated.

As a practical matter, meaningful protection of California’s native plants on non-federal land is afforded only by CEQA. CESA, as it applies to plants, is so riddled with exemptions that it has little protective value.

Environmentalists have their work cut out for them in defending against ill thought out federal and state proposals to combine economic recovery programs with exemptions from environmental laws. We do need to streamline and speed up environmental review procedures, but exempting important projects from environmental laws could have devastating long term effects.

March 17, 2010
Wednesday    7:00 pm
SIERRA SUNRISE CLUBROOM
Phyllis Lindley  899-1514

President’s Message
by Janna Lathrop
Chapter President

This year we are happily sloshing our way into spring. I have received reports that Blennosperma nanum (yellow carpet) is flowering and area vernal pools are full. I find those to be sure signs of a premiere wildflower year. I recommend finding a break in the clouds to look for your wildflower favorites. Better yet join us on one (or more) of the upcoming fieldtrips we have scheduled.

Spring also heralds many activities and events that our chapter will participate in. Outreach is one our most important and successful ways to introduce people to the California Native Plant Society and recruit new chapter members. We have a full slate of such opportunities this spring, I hope you will have time to volunteer for one or more of the following events.

March 20-21: The Soroptomist Home and Garden Show. We will have a display table in the horticulture building courtesy of the Chico Horticultural Society. This is an excellent opportunity to meet hundreds of visitors and to promote chapter activities.

March 25-26: Vernal Pools Conference. California has already lost 95% of its wetlands and the remaining 5% is not safe from development stress. We will help the Vernal Pools Landscapes Committee before and during the conference.

March 27: Name that Wildflower Workshop. This is an excellent introductory wildflower identification class that we help with in collaboration with Friends of the Herbarium. Brush up on your wildflower identifying skills by offering to be a mentor in the classroom or field.

Also March 27: the Chico Creek Nature Center will have the grand opening of its new building and exhibit. We would like to have some MLC members on hand to represent the chapter.

April 3: Oroville Wildflower and Nature Festival. This is the fourth year we will offer short introductory wildflower walks on Table Mountain and an informational display at Riverbend Park in Oroville. We will need help at both locations.

April 25: Our second Native Plant Garden Tour will showcase native plants in a variety of home and demonstration gardens. Helpful members are needed before and the day of the tour graciously.
Invasives Report
by Susan Mason, Invasive Plants Chair

Invasive Plant Removal in Bidwell Park

Winter and early spring are the best times to remove invasive plants from the park. This year, removal of Japanese and European privets are a special focus. Group weeding sessions will be offered almost every day in the park (see the calendar at www.friendsofbidwellpark.org for times and locations) or, if there’s a particular area you want to improve or a specific weed species you’d like to help eradicate (we really need some ivy removal folks), the Chico Park Division can help you get started. Call Lise Smith-Peters at 896-7831 for details.

HELP NEEDED - Someone to represent CNPS at the Butte County General Plan meetings. The next Citizens’ Advisory Committee meeting is March 11, starts early evening. Google Butte County General Plan for more information. Interested persons should contact Suellen Rowison at suellen@garlic.com

Fungi ANYONE?

Any Amateur Mycologists Out There? I’m interested in foraging and learning from other mushroom fanciers (I hunt for the fun of identification, not just for edibles). Of course, fungi are not plants per se, but I figured the CNPS membership might be a likely group. If interested please contact Alicia Springer: alicia.springer@sbcglobal.net.

How Does the CCNC NATIVE GARDEN GROW?
Thanks to Judi Maxfield!!

Judi Maxfield has served as caretaker of the Chico Creek Nature Center Native Plant Garden since 2006 and recently has had to step down. She regularly scheduled workdays and put in many, many hours of her own weeding, pruning, raking, planting, and tending the irrigation. In spite of the foraging deer, the garden has “blossomed” in her capable hands. Judi’s dedicated spirit of volunteering to nurture the native plants leaves the Alice Heckert Native Plant Garden looking its best. The Mount Lassen Chapter Board and membership greatly appreciates all of Judi’s efforts.

Thank you, Judi.

NEW MEMBERS
Michael Duggan     Oroville
Roy Cook          Willow
Michael Hogan     Kenwood

REINSTATED
Steve Overlook    Chico

For information about becoming a member of MOUNT LASSEN CHAPTER CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY contact Membership Chair Phyllis Lindley 530-899-1514, lindley84@att.net or use the application on last page of this newsletter
STILL ACCEPTING GARDENS

by Catie Bishop

Our April 25th 2010 GARDEN TOUR is shaping up to be a really varied offering this year. But we would be happy to accept a couple more gardens. Although most of the gardens are in Chico, we are also looking for ones in other local towns. We have one in Durham and one in Paradise on this year’s tour, so don’t hold back. If you would like to show off your garden, and it has some natives you’ve chosen, let us know and we will come out and help you get set up, or help with plant identification if you need it.

Most gardeners love to share their gardens and their experience with others. We all remember getting started using the old trial and error method. Here is a chance for adventurous gardeners to learn from successful native growers. Gardens are often reflections of a gardener’s personality. Natives can be the answer to garden problems, or the foundation for wildlife habitat - and they beautify the neighborhood. Whatever your needs or likes, natives can fill the bill. The garden tour is an informal but effective way for gardeners to interact and share information.

So please, if you have some natives you have planted on purpose, and are willing to share your experiences with fellow gardeners and native plant enthusiasts, please contact Janna Lathrop, Catie and Jim Bishop, or Suellen Rowlison. It is really a fun day for all, and a good educational experience in, and promotion of, native plants in the home garden.

Hooked on Cocklebur and Bedstraw

by Wes Dempsey

On our field trips I delight in demonstrating how bedstraw (‘cleavers’) branches will tenaciously cling to a sweater when tossed onto it. Jepson explains this feature as “herbage adhesive by small hooked prickles”. Other plants with similar spiny projections that have recurved tips are cockleburs (Xanthium spp.) and burdock (Arctium). The spiny fruits of these make much more satisfying projectiles as this quote from Shakespeare’s “As You Like It” suggests, “They are but burrs, cousin, thrown upon thee in holiday foolery”. In my younger years, my mother reprimanded me in much less tolerant terms when I succumbed to the temptation of hurling cockleburs into my little sister’s hair.

In 1950, a Swiss engineer/inventor, George de Mestral, was similarly attracted to cockleburs but he went a step further to study exactly how this attachment was accomplished. A quick look with a hand lens showed him a forest of tiny, hooked spines ready to attach to animal fur or human clothing. But he had the genius to wonder if this phenomenon could be used as a fastener, like a zipper, and went on to invent VEL-CRO. Think of all of us poor, unimaginative souls who witnessed this plant in action but never made the connection or asked the pertinent question.

Another plant with ‘adhesive’ propensity is bur chervil (Anthriscus caucalis) but I prefer the name ‘preacher’s ticks’. This shade-loving common weed I also call wild parsley because of its delicious parsley odor when crushed. This small fragile plant with tiny white flowers becomes an obnoxious pest when its fruits mature for they are covered with hooked bristles that attach almost permanently to socks or pants. I would like to have a nickel for every hour I have spent trying to detach these. The reference to ‘ticks’ comes from the habit of the old country preachers wearing black felt pants as they went from one country church to another. They would arrive with a myriad of these structures tenaciously adhering to the felt, much to the delight of snickering children.
February 27
HEALTH / SAFETY FOR WORKERS IN THE FIELD SCIENCES
by Josephine Guardino

March 20
INTRODUCTION TO LICHEN IDENTIFICATION
by Tom Carlberg

March 27
NAME THAT WILDFLOWER
by Linnea Hanson, Jenny Marr, and others
Co-Sponsored by the Mount Lassen Chapter of CNPS

April 17
NAME THAT WILDFLOWER
by Linnea Hanson, Jenny Marr, and others
Redbud Chapter CNPS, Grass Valley

May 15
BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION
By Judy McCrary

June 12
INTRODUCTION TO WILLOWS IDENTIFICATION
by John Bair

To REGISTER contact Chico State Herbarium
http://www.csuchico.edu/biol/Herb/Events.html
(530) 898-3511 or NS@csuchico.edu

These workshops are the main source of funding by which the Friends support the functioning of The Chico State Herbarium. The money raised helps fund the staff and facilities in order to continue the public service and care of the collection of scientific and reference botanical specimens.

This prestigious conference is brought to you by AquAlliance and its Vernal Pool Landscapes Committee and will be held on Thursday, March 25, 2010 at Sierra Nevada Brewing Company in Chico. Fieldtrips to explore some magnificent local sites will take place on Friday, March 26th. Sponsors include the Rose Foundation, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game.

Eminent scholars, agency representatives, and other professionals will present research and case studies regarding plant and animal species dependent on the vernal pool ecosystem, conservation efforts, legal cases, and management techniques that have been used to enhance the economic and habitat viability of certain lands. Ellen Bauder of San Diego State University will present the keynote address during the banquet: Science and vernal pool conservation: research questions, methodologies and applications.

California has lost 95% of the estimated five million acres of wetlands that were present in the 1780’s. (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 2000). With the Central Valley growing at twice the rate as the rest of the state, vernal pool landscapes continue to be lost at an alarming rate. The conference will assist planners, ranchers, conservationists, students, and builders to understand the importance of the vernal pool ecosystem and what mechanisms exist or are currently under development to protect it.

For details and registration go to www.aqualliance.net
April Field Trips

CHAFFIN FAMILY FARMS
AND TABLE MOUNTAIN
April 10
Saturday

Meet at the Chico Park & Ride’s west lot (Hwy 99/32) at 12:45 pm and motor to the Chaffin Family Farm and Orchards. We will tour a diversified family farm located at the base of, and upon, Table Mountain. The farm serves local customers with a wide variety of orchard grown products and meats from humanely raised grass fed beef, lamb and goats. Poultry products are produced from pasture raised birds. Farm owners boast of sustainable farming and ranching methods. Guardian dogs are an interesting feature of the ranch operation. These are large dogs that have been bred for centuries to protect livestock. Guardian puppies are bonded to either sheep or goats by raising them with the animals. We will take a guided driving tour of the animal rearing facilities and the farm’s extensive orchards. The tour will end on Chaffin’s pastureland on southern Table Mountain where we should see a great display of wildflowers. Leader: Gerry Ingco, 530-893-5123

PROPYLITE HILLS
IN THE SUTTER BUTTES
April 17
Saturday
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED $15 per person

Meet Chico Park & Ride’s west parking lot (Hwy 99/32) at 7:30 am. This five-mile walk lead by Daniel Barth transects decomposed volcanic rock called “Propylite” that forms rounded hills. With an 800 ft elevation gain, we will take the excursion at a slow pace to relish a wide variety of views; rugged peaks and bucolic valleys; unencumbered vistas of the northern Sacramento Valley and magnificent Bragg’s Canyon. The Propylite Hills are known for their showy wildflower display. With the promise of a wet spring ahead count on seeing impressive displays of baby blue-eyes, cream cups, poppies, popcorn flowers, lupine, clarkias, brodiaea and other foothill species. Bring lunch, water and clothing appropriate to weather conditions, and money for ride sharing.

For RESERVATIONS or information regarding transportation, phone CNPS Coordinator Gerry Ingco, 530-893-5123
Leader Daniel Barth, 530-846-3024

Check out March Field Trips on page 2.
Fragrant
FLOWERS
by Rex Burress

Admittedly, I am one of those people who pokes persistently into the wonders of nature, and, according to one opinion, “a person who goes out to smell the flowers.” However, like Theodore Roosevelt, John Muir, John Burroughs, Asa Gray, Paul Covel and a host of other naturalists, it’s not just the flowers but every environmental thing that goes with them.

I don’t know whether to be glad or sad that I seem to be the only one among my relatives, or my previous Missouri community, who has carried this trait - as many kindred spirit CNPS members have done - throughout life. What makes such a person? What fuels the flower/bird watcher kind of people who see “a world in a grain of sand and a heaven in a wildflower,” and feel an urge to explore the nature of Earth and bow before the beauty?

As I have written about “fetid flowers,” I’m now compelled to balance it out with “fragrant flowers,” and probe YOUR favorites. Some of our non-native species are quite fragrant, as the aroma of blooming citrus, roses, honeysuckle, and lilac are especially scented, and yes, even the invasive Scotch broom! In fact, you will find more pronounced flowery aromas around gardens than in the wild fields. You can go onto Table Mountain in the spring and be confronted by acres of wildflower species, but you won’t find much overpowering dominant fragrance. It is as if they all rely on their beauty rather than fragrance to attract insects. Crushed leaves and stems of various plants often provide more aromatic gratification than flower fragrance.

Although the fragrance from a field of red clover can be entrancing, the vigor of vented Umbellularia californica leaves can stun you with “bay-day-scent,” and who hasn’t smelled the pleasant aroma of conifer needles sun-warmed on the ground. The green Christmas conifers spice-up the air, too, and fragrant tree blossoms of locust, magnolias, and various acacias are very noticeable.

The leaves of Yerba Buena mint, mugwort, fennel, and sage are especially impressive scent-spreaders. Plants, whether fragrant, passive, or fetid contribute to the fabric of life and create an herbal atmosphere conducive to the well-being of all living things.

In early springtime, I always rejoice to see the first buttercups, not that they possess a store of significant scents - but they even have a poisonous quality - but their shiny yellow petals are uplifting in the throes of a new season. In Butte County, Vernon Oswald listed 18 Ranunculus species, and most have those yellow shining faces, but this is one not to sniff for nasal rejuvenation.

The Douglas Violet on Table Mountain in early spring is another delightful yellow face to consider. Certainly not all violets are violet in color, since most of the West Coast Violas are yellow, including many of the 15 species in Butte County described by Oswald.

An exception is the blue Viola odorata, an introduced, fragrant, species from Europe. The 75 U.S. species are mostly native, while worldwide 500 species have been found. Interestingly, the V. odorata can periodically insert iodine and withdraw its fragrance from human detection.

Pansies are very fragrant, and now hundreds of varieties are hybridized for garden decoration. There was a native wild pansy of Europe, Viola tricolor, that was crossed with other Violas, creating a variety of colors. The African violet, Saintpaulia, popular in households, is not a true Viola but in the Gesneriaceae family. The collectables are hybrids derived from native species in East Africa.

In all places then and in all seasons
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

– Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Snowdrop Bush (Styrax officinalis) Photo by Gerry Ingco
Volunteer in BIDWELL PARK

Come join the City of Chico’s Park Division Volunteers. For more information, contact Lise Smith-Peters, Volunteer Coordinator, at 530-896-7831 or via email: lspeters@ci.chico.ca.us website: http://www.ci.chico.ca.us/General_Services_Department/Park_Division/Volunteer_Program.asp

March 9  1 - 4 pm
VOLUNTEER TUESDAYS IN THE PARK, Annie’s Glen & Camelia Way. Meet at the pedestrian bridge over Big Chico Creek (across from Morning Thunder) in the middle of Annie’s Glen (this portion of the park begins where Orient and East 2nd Sts intersect in downtown Chico). Call 530-624-1617 for work site.

March 3 & 10  noon - 3 pm
VOLUNTEER WEDNESDAYS IN THE PARK. Restoration Area between picnic sites #24, 25. Meet by walking in from the Madrone pedestrian entrance #30 (off of Vallombrosa Ave) to the picnic site on N. Petersen Memorial Dr. Call cell 530-624-3982 for work site.

March 13  noon - 3 pm
SATURDAYS IN THE PARK. Cedar Grove. Meet in Cedar Grove parking lot off of E. Eighth St. Call 530-624-3982 for work site.

March 16 & 23  1 - 4 pm
VOLUNTEER TUESDAYS IN THE PARK. Restoration Area between picnic sites #24, 25. Meet by either walking in from the Madrone pedestrian entrance (off of Vallombrosa Ave) or by driving along N. Petersen Dr in the Park. Call cell 530-624-1617 for work site.

March 18  6:30 - 9 pm
PARK WATCH TRAINING. Required training for new volunteers is 6:30 - 9 pm at the Chico City Council Building in Conference Rm 1 at 421 Main St. 2nd group meeting in the Park on Saturday March 20, location to be announced. Call Park Ranger Jessica Erdahl at 896-7831 or email ParkWatch@ci.chico.ca.us.

March 24  noon - 3 pm
VOLUNTEER WEDNESDAYS IN THE PARK. Lost Park Clean Up. Meet in City’s public parking lot #5 on East 1st St behind Solutions Cubed. Call 530-624-1617 for directions.

March 27  noon - 3 pm
VOLUNTEER SATURDAYS IN THE PARK Cedar Grove. Meet in Cedar Grove parking lot off of E. Eighth St. Call 530-624-3982.

March 30  1 - 4 pm
VOLUNTEER TUESDAYS IN THE PARK. Sycamore Restoration site at One Mile. Meet at the north end of Caper Acres, walk past the Caper Acres entrance gate toward the paved path.

March 31  noon - 3 pm
VOLUNTEER WEDNESDAYS IN THE PARK. Meet at Sycamore Pool Bridge. Remove invasive weeds from along a trail that runs along the southside of Big Chico Creek. Park in the One Mile Parking lot on the left side of South Park Dr after you enter the main gate at 4th and Pine St. Parking lot is near the horseshoe pits. If you arrive late, call 530-624-3982.

The Pipevine  March 2010  9.
Join Today!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
I wish to affiliate with the Mount Lassen Chapter

Name _____________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________
City ______________________________________________________________
State _______ Zip _______ email ______________________________
Phone __________________________________________________________

Send Membership Applications to:
MOUNT LASSEN CHAPTER CNPS
P. O. BOX 3212
CHICO, CA 95927-3212

www.cnps.org.

Time Value
MARCH 2010 issue

March 3

Pipevine

Calendar 2010

February
26 - CSUC Tree Tour
28 - CSUC Greenhouse Tour

March
3 - General Meeting
12 - CSUC Tree Tour
17 - Board Meeting
20 - Magalia
21 - Upper Bidwell Park
26 - CSUC Tree Tour
27 - Wildflower Workshop

April
7 - General Meeting
9 - CSUC Tree Tour
10 - Chaffin Farms Table Mt
17 - Sutter Buttes
21 - Board Meeting
25 - Garden Tour